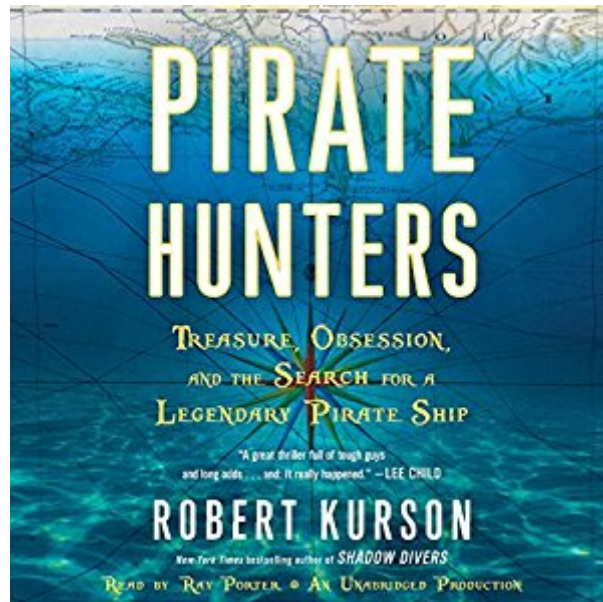


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# Pirate Hunters: Treasure, Obsession, And The Search For A Legendary Pirate Ship



## Synopsis

A thrilling new adventure of danger and deep-sea diving, historic mystery and suspense, by the author of the New York Times best seller *Shadow Divers*. Finding and identifying a pirate ship is the hardest thing to do under the sea. But two men - John Chatterton and John Mattera - are willing to risk everything to find the *Golden Fleece*, the ship of the infamous pirate Joseph Bannister. While he was at large during the Golden Age of Piracy in the 17th century, Bannister's exploits would have been more notorious than Blackbeard's, more daring than Kidd's, but his story and his ship have been lost to time. If Chatterton and Mattera succeed, they will make history - it will be just the second time ever that a pirate ship has been discovered and positively identified. Soon, however, they realize that cutting-edge technology and a willingness to lose everything aren't enough to track down Bannister's ship. They must travel the globe in search of historic documents and accounts of the great pirate's exploits, face down dangerous rivals, and battle the tides of nations and governments and experts. But it's only when they learn to think and act like pirates - like Bannister - that they become able to go where no pirate hunters have gone before. Fast paced and filled with suspense, fascinating characters, history, and adventure, *Pirate Hunters* is an unpausable story that goes deep to discover truths and souls long believed lost.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

PIRATE HUNTERS is more than just "the search for the lost treasure ship of a great buccaneer," it's history, biography, and psychology rolled into one page-turning tale. Ostensibly, this is the story of

two treasure hunters, John Mattera and John Chatterton, who descend upon the Dominican Republic in search of the pirate Joseph Bannister's ship, THE GOLDEN FLEECE. In a battle against two British war ships, the GOLDEN FLEECE went down in 1687, where it has rested in peace ever since. Author Robert Kurson uses the natural story lines built by hunters racing other hunters for one of the most elusive of prizes, a genuine pirate wreck (records for pirate ships were not kept by pirates and their sympathizers, making finds all the more challenging). In addition to the history propelled by the mystery, the false starts necessary to reach an actual strike, and the underwater (and above) descriptions built for suspense, the author stops the narrative to explore the background of both treasure hunters -- Chatterton's as a medic who risked his life repeatedly in Vietnam, and Mattera's as a boy growing up as part of the New York crime families network in the 60s and 70s. Both are diverting tales, though the reader, appetite whetted, longs to get back to the Dominican and the hunt for a great pirate ship. Also leavening the narratives are historical accounts of Joseph Bannister, the British captain turned rogue (and how often does THAT happen?) who took on his countrymen and fought them to a draw against incredible odds. For readers, the derring will do nicely and the reading is pitched once it comes to Bannister.

First off, I had very high hopes for this book after Shadow Divers. My honest belief here is that Pirate Hunters was written by John Mattera and only edited by Robert Kurson. More on this later. With all due respect, this book should have been condensed to a 12 page magazine article. As a certified nautical archaeologist having spent 20 years working overseas in several third world countries (including managing two projects for one of his "heroes" that Mattera claims he consulted with) it's absurd to believe that 4 guys working on off an inflatable for several years in the Dominican weren't shaken down every single day for money or arrested for stealing that country's cultural heritage, permit or not. We had permits in all the countries we worked in, but once word got out on the island that you were diving for a shipwreck, every government and local official assumed you were finding gold and they all wanted their share regardless of what your permit stated. No fuel, or supplies sold to you, no tanks re-filled, boat chained to the dock, cars vandalized. Hard to believe these guys weren't chased out of the country or thrown in jail. Several incidents in the book are not plausible. Examples: Mattera is researching John Bannister in the archives in Seville and requests help from the attendant. She asks Mattera if he is a treasure hunter, and he says yes. The book claims that she then goes out of her way to help Mattera, but reality is if you admit to being a treasure hunter in the archives they escort you out of the building. Spain now has a worldwide claim against all Spanish artifacts and shipwrecks recovered regardless of its location, and treasure

hunters are viewed as thieves against the Spanish government.

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